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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.

Bible Study Course for Organizations for Christian Work. The four years' course of study which was inaugurated last October, and is now about to enter upon its second year, promises to reach a very large membership. Already *three* Australian colonies have officially adopted the course. These will represent a membership of several, perhaps many thousands, which added to our own American thousands, will make an army. The subject for the coming year is one of peculiar interest in that it will give careful study to a line of thought yet entirely undeveloped so far as any popular work is concerned, and which is at the same time the heart of the Old Testament viz.: the foreshadowings of the Christ. The work will deal with not only the distinctly Messianic prophecies but very briefly with the entire history of the Jewish people during its divine guidance through the centuries in which the Messianic ideal was developed. An extract from the outline and direction sheet for the first month will perhaps give a clearer idea of the course. The chapter for the month covers the foreshadowings from the Ante-Mosaic age.

§ 1. Man's creation and his divine destiny. Gen. 1: 26-30.

First day.—Read Genesis 1: 1-30 and note that last of all man is created, everything else being preparatory. Re-read Gen. 1: 26-30 and consider the endowment given man by God at the time of his creation (cf. the words "in our image after our likeness"), and the purpose for which he was created, namely, *to rule over the world*. Consider the importance of this first indication of the divine purpose as to the destiny of man.

§ 2. Man's condition of loneliness; the creation of the woman; the state of innocence. Gen. 2: 18-25.

Second day.—Remembering that the *man* created in Gen. 1 included both man and woman, read in Genesis 2: 18-25 the more specific statement concerning man's loneliness, before the coming of woman, the creation of woman to supply the need, and the state of innocence in which at first they lived together. Read the description of the Garden of Eden which was the place of their first abode, found in Gen. 2: 1-17.

Third day.—Cf. the order of thought in the first two chapters and note (1) that in the first everything mentioned prepares the way for the last, the greatest act of creation, man, who occupies this, the most important position; (2) that in the second, man also is the subject of the story, and that every thing logically takes its place in relation to him; (3) that while the order in one case is chronological, in the other it is logical, but that in both everything bears upon man.

§ 3. The act of disobedience.

Fourth day.—Read Gen. 3:1-13 and consider the nature of the act performed by the man and the woman,—a simple act of disobedience. Note the ideal form in which the greatest event of all history is described. Consider the consequences of this act as the initial act of sin, and note the connection between the fall of man from his former state of innocence and the work for man of Jesus Christ.

§ 4. The punishment of the serpent. The conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; between mankind and the powers of evil, in which man ultimately will gain the victory. Gen. 3:14, 15.

Fifth day.—Read carefully Gen. 3:14, 15 and, understanding that the serpent here represents symbolically the powers of evil, consider the nature of the future conflict which is here foretold between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Note further that in this conflict mankind though injured will ultimately be victorious. Consider whether this victory has yet been gained, or whether every upward step taken by mankind since the fall, has not been a step in this direction. Consider also the part which was to be played by Jesus Christ in behalf of man in his conflict with evil, etc., etc.

The Reading Guild. Names are coming in rapidly for membership in the *Bible Student's Reading Guild*. Already the work has demonstrated its necessity as is shown by the variety of persons to whom it has appealed. The following occupations are representative in its membership: Minister, teacher, student, lawyer, librarian, clerk, chemist, music teacher, painter, editor, stenographer, and in addition many from that unoccupied and yet most occupied class represented by the housewife and mother. Strange to say the majority of the members thus far are people not connected with Sunday school work, showing that the work is taken up for personal improvement and not for the sake of a Sunday school class. The first year's reading commences October first.